

XVIII. Human rights aspects of family planning

(ADOPTED ON THE REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE)

The International Conference on Human Rights,
Recalling the determination of the peoples of the
United Nations, as expressed in the Charter, to reaffirm

faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Considering that article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states *inter alia* that men and women of full age have the right to marry and found a family and that the family is the natural and fundamental group of society,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 2211 (XXI) of 17 December 1966, which recognized *inter alia* the sovereignty of nations in formulating and promoting their own population policies, with due regard to the principle that the size of the family should be the free choice of each individual family,

Recalling also UNESCO resolution 3.252 of 14 December 1966, the World Health Assembly's resolution WHA 20.41 of 25 May 1967 and the conclusions of the World Population Conference held at Belgrade in September 1965 on the subject of family planning,

Noting with interest that the Commission on the Status of Women has begun to study the relationship between family planning and the status of women,

Noting also the Declaration on Population of 10 December 1966, now signed by 30 Heads of State or Government,

Believing that it is timely to draw attention to the connexion between population growth and human rights,

1. *Observes* that the present rapid rate of population growth in some areas of the world hampers the struggle against hunger and poverty, and in particular reduces the possibilities of rapidly achieving adequate standards of living, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, social security, education and social services, thereby impairing the full realization of human rights;

2. *Recognises* that moderation of the present rate of population growth in such areas would enhance the conditions for offering greater opportunities for the enjoyment of human rights and the improvement of living conditions for each person;

3. *Considers* that couples have a basic human right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and a right to adequate education and information in this respect;

4. *Urges* Member States and United Nations bodies and specialized agencies concerned to give close attention to the implications for the exercise of human rights of the present rapid rate of increase in world population.

*25th plenary meeting
12 May 1968*